

HamsterWheel 2022, one for the books for sure for so many reasons!!!

Friday night I had my go to dinner (salmon, potato and veggie), packed everything I could in the car and went to bed fairly early knowing I had to get up early to drive to the venue. Saturday morning up early, double and triple checked that I have everything I might possibly need as I would be solo for the majority of the race. My husband was driving down in his own vehicle and off we went.

We get to the venue nice and early, no pressure, great! We get our shelter up, I get all my stuff organized, visit with friends and wait to start.

Its go time! First loop feeling great, come in and my husband remarks that I was pretty quick on that loop. Quick change of hydration bottle and out again. Loop 2, miles are ticking by but now here comes the heat and with that the sour stomach. Despite that, was able to keep my pace and back to the start/finish line in about the same time. Feeling optimistic I just went with the day and what it had to offer. Everyone was so happy and all day and night I would hear "good job", "looking great", "keep up the good work". We were all each others cheerleaders.

I wasn't really sure what to expect this time around, sure I've done this race many times before, but not the number of hours I knew I'd be there this time, certainly not the distance. This was to be my first attempt at 75 miles. Lots of things were going thru my mind, "Can I do this distance?", "What if I end up walking more than I was planning to?", and all the what ifs in between. But then I thought, "What if you do it?" which turned into, "I can do it!"

This was also the first time I had a pacer and what a help that was, one of my good friends came about 9pm and ran 3 loops with me.

It was great to be there with other teammates too. Watching Bill Leonard and Steven Blase crush their goals was just incredible! Way to go guys and so nice to share the course with you. Special thanks to Bill Leonard, despite being near to the end of his race, he and his wife shared my last lap with me! Looking forward to many more adventures!

But, perhaps the most memorable of the entire event, having my 4 year old grandson run me in and wrap his little arms around me when I finished. There are no words!!!

I made my goal, 76 miles finished. Never underestimate yourself!! Yes it was tough, yes I had some doubts, but I didn't let it derail me.

Lessons Learned - when you don't think you can take another step, you can

- looking back, there were most likely times when I stopped to walk when I could have kept running, next time, exhaust the run before starting to walk

- I can do hard things :)